



Becoming A Communication Specialist

Responsibilities:

Operators are trained to answer 911, emergency and non-emergency calls from citizens and to quickly assess their need to classify the caller situations. Radio operators dispatch emergency and non-emergency calls to Greenville police and fire units and to Greenville County forensic units; maintain accurate unit status and monitor the radios to ensure the safety of the responders.

All operators are trained and required to maintain a high degree of skill, knowledge and proficiency in all areas. The ability to efficiently multi-task is required to accomplish the tasks related to hearing information, making quick and accurate decisions, entering data to the computers and responding to the radio traffic. The work performed requires accurate and timely actions by the operators and is often accomplished under stressful conditions.

The Greenville Police Department's Communications Bureau has become one of the most technically advanced PSAPs in the Upstate. The technological advancements aid operators in the performance of their duty to provide efficient services to the public and first responders and require that employees have the ability to understand and utilize the systems. Key employees are trained to correct problems, maintain the systems and train others. The primary systems used by the Communications Bureau are: Motorola- Palmetto 800 MHz radio, Printrak Computer Aided Dispatch, DataMax and the Plant CML Vesta – Computerized Telephone system.

Training Program

The standards and training certifications endorsed by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) are used for the development of all processes and to complete all training for the Communications Bureau. There are several phases to the Communication Specialist-I Training Program, starting with a basic orientation to the Police Department. Recruits are assigned to various Communication Specialist Trainers (CST) throughout the process and are evaluated on job performance skills, attitudes/relationships and appearance. Once recruits have achieved a level of performance, they must attend a one-week communications course at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. After successful completion of the CS-I Training Program, the recruits will continue to be evaluated by their shift supervisor until they complete a one-year probationary period.



Ongoing Training and Development Opportunities

The Communications Bureau relies on the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) for guidance in the technical and legal areas of emergency communications. Two members of the bureau are Emergency Number Professionals (ENP) and there are three APCO instructors who provide training and guidance for all employees. Additionally, two employees are active on state boards - one as 2nd vice president for the South Carolina Chapter of APCO and one as secretary for the Palmetto State Law Enforcement Officers Association (PSLEOA). Employees also participate as committee members for the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy, Greenville Technical College and the National Emergency Number Association and instructors teach APCO and National Criminal Information Center (NCIC) classes throughout the state.

Communications employees have many opportunities locally and throughout the state to develop their skills and knowledge. Some of the opportunities include conducting presentations and answering questions at the Greenville Police Department's Citizens Academy, Greenville County School System's HouseWise-StreetWise Program and Greenville High School's Career Day event.